



DALLARAT FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

EXCURSION/NEWS SHEET - NOVEMBER 1975

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NEXT MEETING

Friday, 7th November
Central Technical School, 8pm.
Speaker - Mr. H. Hooper, who will
speak on Plant Genetics.

NEXT EXCURSION

Will be to the Mt. Erip area on
the 9th November. Mrs. Bedgood
will be our leader.

LAST MEETING

Mr. Ern Perkins showed us interesting slides on the North-Eastern area of Victoria, and described how the mountains in that area were formed. He also told us of the Geology of the area, and how certain plants grow on certain areas and types of soil and rock. The slides showed much of the Warby Ranges, Strathbogie, Mts Buller, Hotham and Feathertop. Other slides portrayed the vegetation following bushfires. Mr. Perkins also told us an interesting story about a rock orchid being cultivated.

LAST MEETING

A letter from Lal Lal Blast Furnace
Committee of Management asking for

Club help in recording flora and fauna of the area has, to date, resulted in two excursions to the reserve. The first, to record flora and fauna generally, the second to record the flora on the slag heap area to the Water Level. Good results have been achieved so far and opportunity has been taken to question possible future development in the area. Two areas we should be concerned with are increased usage by the public and any possible work such as pipe lines or roads be done with as little damage to the environment after proper consultation with interested parties. Much has been written of the early history of the area, but what has only just been realised is the significance of the Blast Furnace. It is literally an 18th Century development created in Australia on the only iron ore deposits ever worked in Victoria. Hence the National Trust interest. The research and history of the whole project is so interesting that it is hoped, in the near future to have a speaker on the subject.

W.V.F.N.C.A. Hall's Gap weekend proved most enjoyable. Apart from a busload from Melbourne areas who stayed at a motel, the majority were in caravans or tents at the A.N.A. Caravan Park & Flats. On Saturday morning we were taken on an inspection tour to the old "Flume Line" at Barbican Rocks - very interesting, and many tiny "treasures" including "Fairies Aprons" were found growing among the large areas of mosses growing on the rocks. In the afternoon, Mr. Laurie Solly from Stawell led us out in the direction of Lake Fyans where we saw a good variety of orchids and birds. On Saturday night following the Annual Meeting of Delegates in the Hall's Gap Hall, Mr W. Davis from the Australian Conservation Foundation spoke on Aims and Policies of A.C.F. - a most interesting speaker, and obviously keenly enthusiastic about the work being done by the foundation. Stawell ladies provided a nice supper. Despite rain on Sunday morning, we proceeded out to Mt. Zero Road and made the Headquarters for the day the Mt. Difficult Plantations Picnic Area. Bird-watching and orchid-viewing were again popular. Rain gave way to a glorious sunny day, and after lunch some visited a nearly abandoned quarry where we saw three very old stone buildings and a square stone chimney. This area had many tinsel lilies.

Among the orchids noted (remember I'm very amateur) were several Greenhoods, Flying Duck, Mosquito, Donkey, Leopard, Spiders (white and red), Rabbit's Ears, Wax-Lip, Pink Fingers, Several Sunorchids, and the leaves of the Red-Beak. My list also includes *Stybidium Calculatum*, *McMillianii*, *Sutocillium*. There was much excitement when someone found a bearded lily (I have since found one at Enfield). Also noted in full flower were different grevilleas, Fringe Myrtles, Wax Lily, Yellow Conebush, various sundews, Beurea, Love Creeper, Kunzea, Hakeas, Snow Myrtles, Goodenias, violets and the dainty trigger plants, and *Stackhousia*, and many more. Many lingered on after official farewells at afternoon tea time.

Contributed by Mrs. Williamson.

THE JUNGLE of ranges 320 km north of Roma in Queensland forms part of the Great Dividing Range. They are of volcanic origin, and the action of water pouring from the hard Tertiary basaltic tablelands have cut deep gullies in the basalt and the underlying Jurassic sandstone. Some of the gorges are 1500 feet deep and the highest basalt peak reaches a height of over 3,500 feet. The result of this weathering is splendid scenery, with the main gorge made by the Carnarvon Creek. Many narrow side gullies enter from both sides of the main gorge.

The 66,480 acres of the National Park consists mainly of the upper reaches of Carnarvon Creek. The creeks are lined with *Livistonia* and *Myrtles*. The line and Cheesewood trees, *Eugenia*, *Eucalyptus*

Polycarpa, E. teruipes, E. umbellata, and Callisteman. The moist rocks in the narrow gullies are covered with ferns, creepers and epiphytes.

On the basalt tablelands there are many species of compositae, acacias, hibbertias, goodenias, prostontheras, Leguminosae, grevilleas, eriostemon, the tree, etc, etc.

Contributed by Mrs. Bedggood.

On October 12th, our family had a day out at Mt. Egerton. After heavy rains the day before, the river was running fast, much to the delight of the children. We were surprised to find it so dry underfoot.

While the fire was getting hot for our barbeque, we had fun on the bridge sailing cans with the children trying to hit them with stones as they went by. (Editor's note: Children's ages ranged from 12 months to over 50). We were lucky as the rain held off while we had our bar-be-que, the first shower coming just after.) When it had stopped we went for a walk. A list of what we found follows: lots of Greenhoods, (*Pterostylis nutaris*), Pink Fingers (*Caladinia carnea*), a Blunt Greenhood (*Pterostylis curta*), some Spider Orchids (*Caladinia dilatata*) and Rabbit's Ears (*Thelymitra antennifer*), Acacia Frostrata, and lots of different Peas. A Blue Tongue Lizard was well-admired, and there was much excitement when a rabbit ran across in front of us. Elizabeth was so intent on looking for flowers she picked up 80 cents in 20, 1, 2, and 5 cent pieces. While we were having a cup of tea before leaving we were kept busy looking at so many birds, some of which Peter has written down: Striated Pardalote, White-browed Woodswallow, Pallid Cuckoo, Yellow-wing Honeyeater, Blue Wren and Family, Brown Hawk, Kookaburra, Scarlet Robin, Silver eye, Brown Tree-creeper, Raven, Grey Thrush, Whiteback Magpie, Crimson Rosellas (flock of 50+), Black Faced Cuckoo shrike, Tree Martin, Welcome Swallow.

It was a very pleasant day indeed.

Contributed by Mrs. Fry.

FROM DEVONPORT, in Tasmania comes the news that their newspaper "Nats' News" is having a rest, and instead they have a Newsletter, which will be handed out at meetings in an effort to reduce postage costs.

One of the Devonport F.N. members writes that they discovered an old log cabin out from Oatlands, which is probably the only surviving one in Tasmania, its date being about 1834. It was in a bad state of repair, with its roof partly fallen in, the windows missing, and a large ivy tree growing out the back doorway. It had four rooms that were lined, and it had board floors. Outside was a large "witches cauldron" which had probably been used originally at a whaling station for boiling up the whale oil, but now was used as a horse trough. There had been a

job to get it there. This member also saw on a property an old single storey house apparently used as a garage. It had a strange brick oven on one wall, one oven over the other, then another two ovens side by side. Also on this property, a short distance from the homestead, is a sheep-dip still in use. Nothing unusual, I don't suppose, except the dip is carved out of solid sandstone. The original dip was carved from solid rock, and trough shaped, but a later owner had one end rounded. The dip is five feet deep, and when full, holds 750 gallons.

WE WERE JUST RUNNING THESE BIRDS DOWN TO THE RIVIERA, SEE:

Tens of thousands of migrating house martins were observed on the southeast coast of England. The birds appeared to be exhausted, apparently grounded by a spell of cold, wet weather. Approximately 300 birds, too weak to fly, were carried across the English Channel in a Hovercraft to assist them in their journey south. When the weather improved, most of the remaining birds were able to continue their journey unassisted.

ENVIRONMENT, JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1975

BIRD LIST

BENTLEY DAM - BLAST FURNACE AREA

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Common Bronzewing | 41. Grey Currawong | 21. Shrike-Tit |
| 2. White-Faced Heron | 42. White-Backed Magpie | 22. Black-Faced Cuckoo Shrike |
| 3. Brown Goshawk | | 23. Striated Thornbill |
| 4. Wedge-Tailed Eagle | | 24. Brown Thornbill |
| 5. Crimson Rosella | | 25. Buff-Tailed Thornbill |
| 6. Kookaburra | | 26. White-Browed Scrub-wren |
| 7. Fan-Tailed Cuckoo | | 27. Blue Wren |
| 8. Horsfield Bronze-Cuckoo | | 28. Dusky Woodswallow |
| 9. Golden Bronze-Cuckoo | | 29. Orange-winged Bittella |
| 10. Welcome Swallow | | 30. White-throated Tree-creeper |
| 11. Tree Martin | | 31. Mistletoe Bird. |
| 12. Grey Fantail | | 32. Spotted Pardalote |
| 13. Satin Flycatcher | | 33. Eastern Striated Pardalote |
| 14. Restless Flycatcher | | 34. White-naped Honeyeater |
| 15. Scarlet Robin | | 35. Eastern Spinebill |
| 16. Flame Robin | | 36. White-Eared Honeyeater |
| 17. Yellow Robin | | 37. Yellow faced Honeyeater |
| 18. Golden Whistler | | 38. Red-Browed Finch |
| 19. Rufous Whistler | | 39. Australian Raven |
| 20. Grey Thornbill | | 40. Little Raven |

5th
October
1975